

Willows are grown for the sake of the osiers, which are a necessity, and not for fuel, and the whole of the manure is required for cooking and heating purposes.

He said that his village becomes poorer annually owing to the heavier exactions of the officials and the larger sums demanded to "buy off robbers." The latter is a complaint often made in the villages which are near the Turkish frontier, a boundary which from all accounts needs considerable "rectification." The people say that Kurds cross the border, and that unless they bribe them they drive off their sheep and cattle and get over it again safely, but I doubt the truth of these statements.

I got away at sunrise for a march of nominally fourteen miles, but in reality twenty-four. Sharban not only stated the distance falsely but induced others to do the same thing, and when he passed me at midday, saying the halting-place was only two miles ahead, he went on for twelve miles, his desire being to rejoin that bug-bear, the "big caravan." which he heard had reached Urmi. The result is that I have had to rest for two days, and he has gained two days' pay, but has lost time.

After some serious difficulties in crossing some swampy streams and a pitiable display of cowardice on *Boy's* part, we embarked on the magnificent plain of Sulduz, where Johannes, with a supreme self-confidence which imposed on me, took the wrong one of two tracks, and we rode west instead of east, to within a

few hours'  
journey of a pass into Turkey through the  
magnificent  
range of the Zibar mountains, which even at  
this advanced season are in some places heavily  
patched with  
last winter's snow.

To regain the caravan route we had to  
cross the  
greater part of this grand plain, which I  
had not then  
seen equalled in Persia for fertility and  
population. It  
possesses that crown of blessings, an  
abundant water